



How to overcome the challenges of winning new B2B clients?

SURVEY RESULTS In July 2021 we conducted a LinkedIn survey on the following question with the result shown below:

Which step on the journey to win new B2B clients do you experience to be the most challenging?

Identifying target clients	14%
Making first contact	55%
Developing a winning proposal	23%
Negotiating prices	9%

22 votes • Poll closed

22 survey participants representing 20 individual companies – all in delivering B2B Services & Solutions to clients.

More details on the group of participants you will find on the next page.

HOW TO MAKE FIRST CONTACT – 3 APPROACHES THAT WORK

Given that 55% see “Making first contact” as the most challenging step in winning new B2B clients, we share the following approaches with you that have proven to be effective.

Meeting the right people at events

Review the event participants list (if there is one) and contact people in advance of the event. Ask if they are interested in a short „get to know each other“ at the event and schedule a time to meet during coffee break or before the event.

This also works at virtual events, if you contact people for a catch-up afterwards.

*One of my colleagues was very successful with this approach at on site events. And I personally met new people by asking for a video call after a virtual event.
 - quote from Sibylle Kammer*

Getting a conversation by writing – not cold calling

Most people hate getting „cold calls“, therefore send a well written personal email to the decision maker you would like to talk to. Make him/her curious, so he/she wants to meet you personally or via video call.

Write an email and not a LinkedIn message – LinkedIn messages have a significantly lower success rate, than emails. In most cases you will find out their email address.

I personally won new customers with this approach and got the chance to talk to decision makers at top executive level in large companies. – quote Sibylle Kammer

No fear of being ignored or rejected

One of our clients always says: „no contact – no contract“. We totally agree. Therefore, just do it – and do not find excuses.

Of course, it will happen that some of your emails get ignored or you get an answer that they are not interested in talking to you.

Next time you are in that situation, apply the following mindset:

- 1) Now it will take one attempt less to the next person who will want to meet you.
- 2) Now you know, there is no interest & business, and you can focus on other opportunities.

SOME IDEAS FOR THE OTHER KEY STEPS OF WINNING NEW B2B CLIENTS

Identifying target clients

Clearly define the criteria of what type of companies best match your offering.

Reflect which companies you currently serve and which you particularly like working with. Also reflect which existing clients particularly value your approach and services. What are the key characteristics of these companies? What other companies are similar and therefore good prospects (and future clients)?

Define your focus market and remember "being everything for everyone" is not a strategy.

Once you identified the criteria, you can do your own research or use tools provided by companies such as Dun & Bradstreet (Switzerland) to get to concrete company lists and relevant background information.

Developing a winning proposal

Given in practice many people copy paste from previous proposals, not only best practices are copied, but also bad habits.

In case you are unsatisfied with your proposal win rate and the quality of your proposals, two approaches can make a difference:

- 1) Consistently ask your prospects for feedback about your won/lost pitches. Conduct a personal interview by someone independent of the customer facing proposal team. Ask detailed questions. You will learn a lot.
- 2) Have an external B2B sales expert with experience as board member review 1-2 of your proposals.

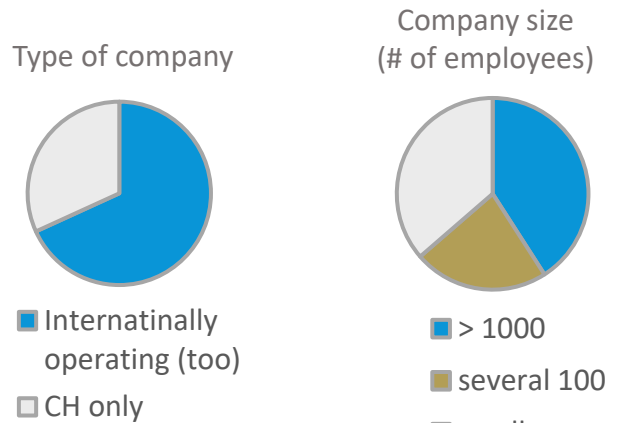
Incorporate that feedback into your next bids.

Negotiating prices

In our experience, you can prevent extensive price discussions by communicating your standard prices (also in early stages of a potential collaboration) in a transparent and open way. Clients appreciate it and know what they can expect if they continue talking to you. If they don't, you rather want to know sooner than later.

SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

The survey results shown on the previous page represent a group of 22 participants from 20 companies with the following qualities.



HOW INSPIRATION4BUSINESS CAN HELP

You can get

- B2B sales sparring/ coaching and hands-on expertise (such as new client acquisition tactics, proposal writing or application of pricing psychology)
- outside perspectives that help further develop your best practices and chances to win new clients & mandates
- access to Sibylle Kammers personal experience and insights as
 - Board Member, knowing how your potential clients think and act
 - Lead Partner, where she won large projects
 - COO Markets, Head of Marketing & Sales, Proposal Advisor, Head of Business Development in leading professional services firms
 - business blog writer and key note speaker.

CONSULTING – COACHING - TRAINING

B2B Business Development has been my passion for more than 20 years. I love it when I can add value by sharing my extensive experience on a strategic as well as on a hands-on level.



Sibylle Kammer, Managing Partner, Inspiration4Business AG