

Six Things You Should Know About C-Level Decision Makers

Corporate decision makers are the target of any sales team aiming to get into a medium- or enterprise-level business. They are generally experienced, savvy, and hard-to-sell gatekeepers to the target corporation's business. Knowing a few things about them can help any sales manager get his team inside the target for a much better chance at success.

1 - Business Results Are Their Bread and Butter

C-level decision makers base nearly everything on how something will or will not improve their bottom line. Everything from reducing costs to increasing revenues are included here. Your goal should be to emphasize how your product addresses issues like productivity, customer loyalty, increased sales, decreased costs, etc. If you can't explain how your product will do one of these things within fifteen seconds of talking with an executive, you will not make a sale.

2 - Time Is a Commodity

One thing all C-level executives have in common: busy schedules. The above note about appealing to them within fifteen seconds? Critical.

3 - Priorities Change Quickly, But Not Always Permanently

If an interested executive suddenly turns cold for no reason you can surmise, it's almost always because of an internal priority change in their company. Perhaps they're coming to a new fiscal quarter and require budget changes or are faced with a shortfall they must accommodate. Or maybe the company is switching its workforce needs or business emphasis. If you are not sure what the change is, wait for a quarter (3 months) and approach the executive again. Priorities may have switched again, opening a door for you.

4 - Meetings Are the Daily Grind for C-Level Execs

All day, every day, these executives live and breathe meetings. They often move from one to the next and cannot return phone calls for hours or days. Remember this the next time you have not had a return phone call and make it a point to re-connect often.

Make sure that your messages to them pinpoint how you can help and don't rely on generalities, but use specifics when you do so.

5 - Most Execs Want Their Next Big Splash

The business world is about steady performance and the "big splash." Every C-level wants to make a big impression with something in order to further their career. The goal of every C-level is to move up the ladder and that happens when they think big picture and get the big splash. That big splash, if you do it right, could be thanks to you. Figure out how your offering or product can create huge savings in time or money, increase revenues, or otherwise help the target company and then tailor that information so that the C-level can use it and make it seem like their own idea to their bosses. Win-win.

6 - Above All, Do Not Waste Time

Whatever you do, do not waste the C-level executive's time. At any given moment, they are likely to have at least forty hours or more worth of work on their desks. Your goal is to interrupt as little as possible while still getting your product in front of them. Respect their time and, most of all, show them that it's not being wasted with you.