

JORIK VAN DEN BOSCH

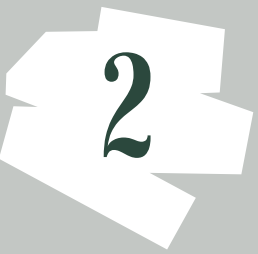
STRATEGIC PROSPECTING

The
no-nonsense
sales guide to
consistently
winning new
B2B clients

**Lannoo
Campus**

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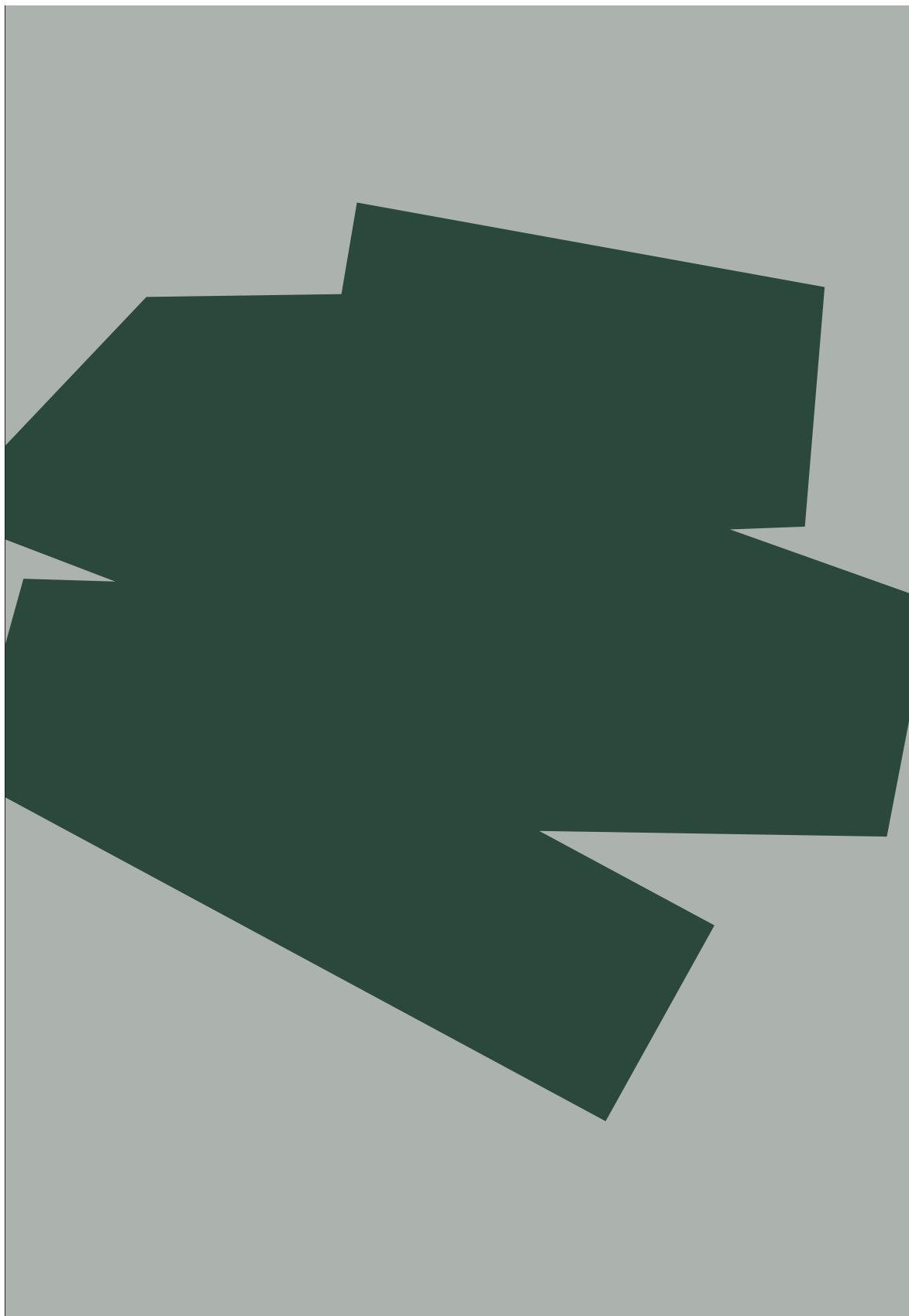
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FOREWORD

Let's be honest. Most prospecting today? It's just bad outreach disguised as automation.

'Hey Michael, I see we have 23 mutual connections. Fancy getting acquainted?'

No. No, I do not. And neither do your prospects.

Cold outreach is the digital equivalent of walking around at a party asking everyone whether they want to buy your fantastic product. And what do you get in return? Exactly. Cold looks. No deals.

And that is precisely why Jorik wrote this book.

Strategic Prospecting is not a '10 tips for better cold emails' booklet. It is not a TED Talk in paperback format. This is a strategic, structured and smart approach to prospecting that actually works—in B2B, with real companies, for real results.

Jorik is a rare breed when it comes to sales. The youngest pilot ever in Belgium—not a joke—a guitarist in not one but two bands, and an engineer who approaches prospecting with precision, data and scalable systems. And, as if that were not enough, add to that a mind that dissects prospecting as if it were a musical score, and you get someone who sells to the rhythm of trust, timing and... crunching riffs.

He does not get stuck in theory. He has already helped more than 250 companies transform cold outreach into their main growth engine. This book is not some collection of tips and tricks. Nor is it a manual on spamming people on LinkedIn or cold-calling until your voice gives out.

This book is about relevance in sales. Out with generic bulk messages; in with real conversations that start with value. Jorik shows you how to stop pitching and start attracting. How to structure your sales machine. How to build your outreach sequentially, like a good live set—with build-up, timing and hooks that stick. Strategic Prospecting is what happens when an aerospace engineer throws himself into B2B sales. Think: methodical, scalable, and, importantly, respectful.

Because let's be honest: nobody wants your sales brochure. Nobody is waiting for your perfect pitch. People want value, trust and a reason to act now. Jorik understands that. He does not build a sales funnel; he builds a runway, ready for your prospect to touch down at exactly the right moment.

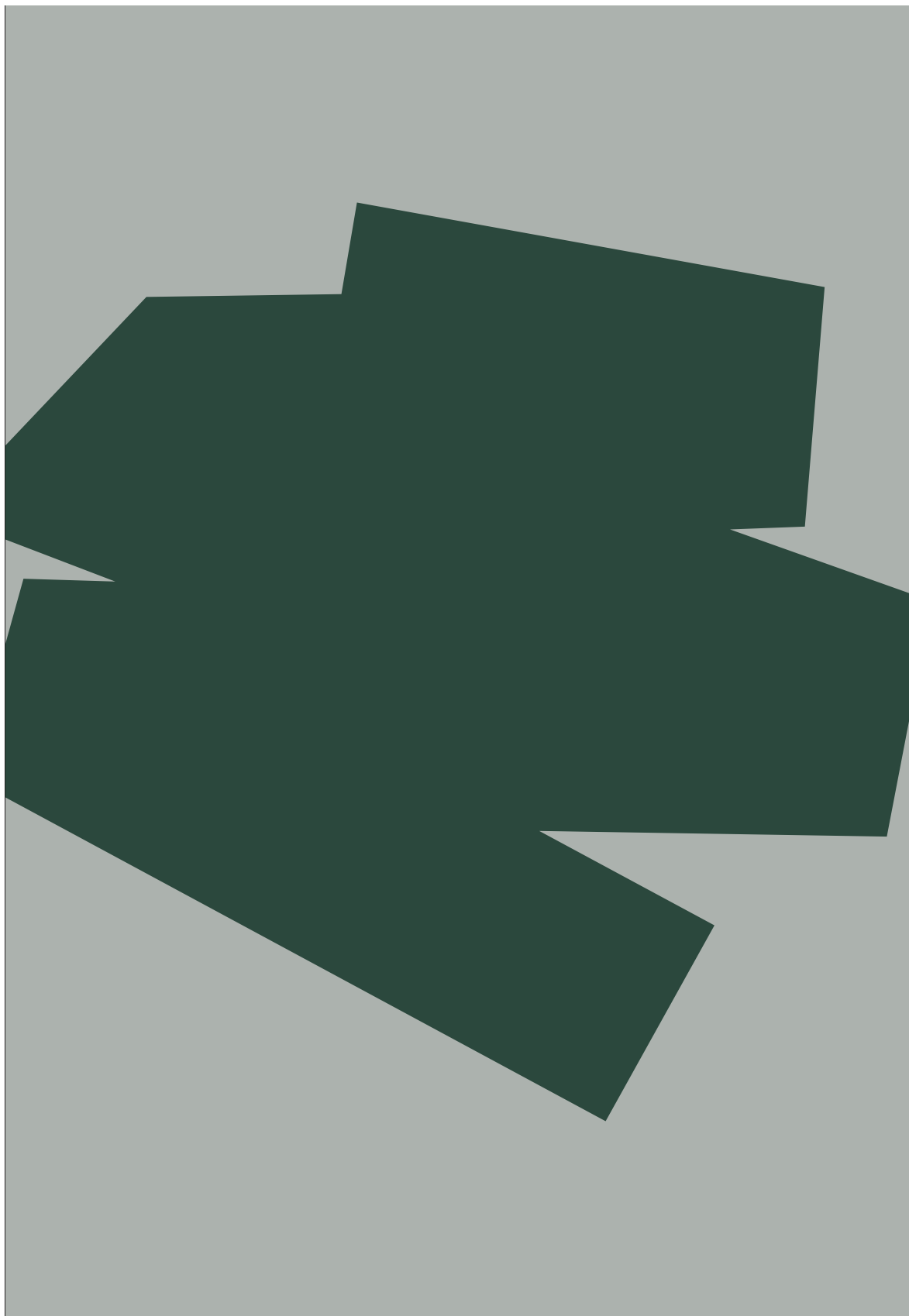
If you are done with guesswork and finally want to build a predictable pipeline—read this book. Highlight it. Fold down the corners. Apply it.

With *Strategic Prospecting*, you get that entire playbook handed to you on a platter.

Michael Humblet, author of *Nobody Knows You* and *Why Now*, founder of Chaomatic and co-founder of School of Sales

Let's go.

Time to
build your
outbound
sales
machine.



INTRODUCTION

Why we have all become door-to-door salespeople (and why that doesn't work)

Imagine this. You are at home, quietly getting on with something, when suddenly the doorbell rings. You walk to the front door and before you even open it, you can already see it: a high-visibility vest, a badge around the neck, a smile that has been trained a little too well. Great. A salesperson.

Maybe he is selling energy contracts. Or magazines. Or he is collecting for a so-called good cause. Either way: you know what time it is. You are trapped. He asks one or two questions—usually rhetorical ones—and then starts talking. A lot. About his organisation, about their mission, about today's special campaign. You stand there, waiting for the moment when you can politely but firmly say: 'Thank you, I'm not interested.' And if you are honest, that moment never really comes quickly enough.

Nobody enjoys that

And yet... most B2B salespeople today still do exactly the same thing. In a cold call. In a cold email. In a LinkedIn message. They barely ask a question and show hardly any interest in you as a customer. They immediately start talking about themselves: their product, their service, their unique approach—and then ask for a meeting.

According to research by Gartner, **75% of B2B buyers would rather have no contact with a salesperson**. And that is not because people do not want to be helped. It is because salespeople are **too often pushy, do not listen and show no genuine interest**.

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to a sales-
person



In this book, I want to show you that prospecting can – and should be – done differently.

We are not going to turn you into a better smooth talker. We are going to help you become a better conversation partner. Someone who shows genuine interest. Who knows who they are talking to. Who helps first and sells later. Because in a world where buyers are increasingly taking the DIY route, it is precisely that human connection that makes all the difference.

Welcome to the new sales.



1.

Information overload

Customers are inundated with emails and LinkedIn messages and are not waiting for yet another sales pitch.

2.

Better informed

Customers are better informed than ever before. They do their own research on Google and listen to others. They want guidance and peace of mind.

3.

New technology

New technology makes communication possible in a range of different ways. It also supports the salesperson throughout the sales process.

So what has changed?

Sales has changed fundamentally. And yet many salespeople today still walk around as if it were 2005. But the world is no longer the same. Customers have changed. The way they buy has changed. And so we need to change too.

In the past, sales was something very different. Salespeople were often out on the road, driving from one customer to the next, standing at trade fairs and being seen as *the* source of information. Customers listened, because there were few alternatives. They also had more time. As a salesperson, you were the one who knew something the customer did not yet know. Today? That is completely different.

1. Information overload

We are being overwhelmed. Every day, customers are hit with a deluge of emails, LinkedIn messages, adverts, cold calls, webinars, articles and white papers. Everyone is shouting. Everyone is trying to get attention.

For the customer, it becomes difficult to know **what is reliable and what is not**. They literally cannot see the wood for the trees any more. And what happens then? Customers shut down. They take in less. They respond more slowly. They avoid anything that even remotely smells like a sales pitch.

2. Buyers are better informed

Today, every customer googles their problem. They read reviews, listen to other customers, follow thought leaders on LinkedIn and draw up a shortlist before you have even said a word.

They do not need you for information. What they *are* looking for is **someone who helps them make choices**, understands their situation, gives them direction and takes the burden off their shoulders.

The problem? They do not simply trust you. Especially not if you start with a sales pitch. That creates resistance. Selling therefore does not begin with talking, but with listening. And only once you have earned trust do you get to propose something.

3. New technology and other communication channels

Technology is changing the game too. Gartner predicted that by 2025, more than **80% of sales would happen digitally**. The US has largely moved in that direction, while Europe has generally adopted digital sales at a somewhat slower pace. Social media plays a major role in this, but so do lead tracking, automation, video, CRM integrations...

At the same time, the way we communicate is changing as well. Younger generations use tools such as **TikTok, WhatsApp and Snapchat**, or they expect **personal interaction via LinkedIn, or even voice notes**. Traditional emails are often too slow or too vague.

Many salespeople struggle to adapt to this. They cling to old habits, while customers are now making decisions and communicating in a completely different way.

These three developments—information overload, better-informed buyers and new technology—mean that the old way of selling simply no longer works.

The good news? There is a new way of selling. And it is more human, more relevant and more effective than ever.

In this book, I will show you step by step how to do it.

The 95:5 rule – Why we are targeting the wrong audience

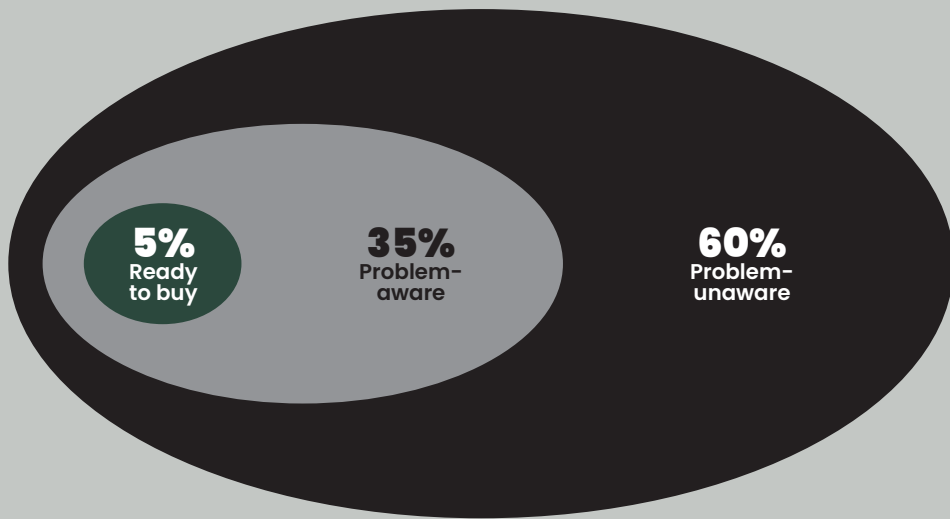
On average, **only 5% of your target audience is actively looking for a solution today**. Does someone fall into that group? Great. Then it makes sense to talk about your products and services. Then you are allowed to pitch. That person expects you to.

But for the other 95%, that makes no sense at all. And yet we do it on a massive scale.

Most salespeople, marketing campaigns and outbound flows focus on the 5% who are ready to buy. They chase the warm leads, the quick wins. But that leads to overcompetition, price pressure, short-term thinking and a pipeline that always has to be rebuilt from scratch.

On average, **only 5% of your target audience is actively looking for a solution today.**

If you truly want to make a difference, you need to look at things differently. Because your real growth margin lies within that 95%. That 95% actually consists of two parts: one group—around 35%—that is aware of a problem, and a larger group—60%—that does not yet realise it has a problem or a need at all. Let's take a closer look at these two groups.



Problem-aware, but not yet actively looking for a solution

This group knows that something is going on. They may already have defined a challenge. Or they see an opportunity: saving money, generating more output, gaining time, making fewer mistakes. So they are not necessarily 'in pain', but they do feel there is something to gain. Maybe they have seen something at a competitor? Read something? Or simply have a gut feeling that things could be better?

But... it is not yet urgent enough to take action.

Problem-unaware

The largest group in your market is not ready to buy and **often does not even know that it is missing something**.

They do not know your product/service and certainly do not understand your added value. This group is not aware of its problem or the potential gain. For them, a sales pitch is not just pointless, but actually irritating.

This largest group within your market is not yet aware at all of a problem, a need or a missed opportunity. They are busy with their day-to-day operations, feel no acute pain and therefore do not understand why your product or service would be relevant. Your added value? They do not see it yet. And that is exactly why a sales pitch at that moment is completely pointless—or worse: irritating.

A different approach for each stage

The key to modern sales? Understanding that you do not approach everyone in the same way.

You treat someone who is ready to make a decision differently from someone who is only just starting to recognise a problem. And you treat that person differently again from someone who is completely unaware of that problem. That is exactly what I want to teach you in this book: how to set up a concrete, workable approach for each of those stages. No tricks, but strategy. And because the largest part of your market—around 60%—is still in the problem-unaware stage, that is the group we will mainly focus on. Why? Because that is where your biggest growth potential lies.

But it is also where your biggest challenge lies. Because that cycle takes a very long time. In B2B sales, sales cycles range from three months to sometimes two years, depending on your sector and the complexity of your offering. Expecting someone who does not yet understand anything about your problem today to sign next week? That is wishful thinking. So you will need to work smartly, structurally and persistently.

How is this book structured?

In this book, I will take you through that entire process step by step. No fluffy theory, but practical insights, examples and tools.

Chapter 1 – Building trust

Everything starts with trust. And trust is something you build strategically—not something that just appears.

Chapter 2 – Lead generation

New customers start with new leads. Thanks to technology, there are now endless ways to get the right people on your radar in a more targeted, smarter and faster way. In this chapter, I will show you how.

Chapter 3 – Cold calling

Calling is not dead. It has simply evolved. In this chapter, you will get an approach that allows you to open a conversation without embarrassment or tension—even with busy decision-makers.

Chapter 4 – Cold outreach by email

You have a list. Now what? Now it comes down to handling that first contact properly. In this chapter, you will discover how to write cold emails that actually get read—and that genuinely lead to responses.

Chapter 5 – Structure in your sales process

A good sales process is no accident. We will build a structured way of working, so that nothing slips through the cracks—and your funnel keeps moving.

Chapter 6 – Staying top of mind

Not every lead will become a customer tomorrow. But someone who is not ready today may well be ready in three months' time. In this chapter, you will learn how to stay visible in a structured way, without pushing—but with results.

After reading this book, you will know exactly how to warm up cold leads, how to activate, help and convert them—at a pace that works for them and delivers returns for you.

So the question is: **how are you going to tackle it?**

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A MARRIAGE PROPOSAL ON YOUR FIRST DATE

This chapter is both a reality check and a practical guide: why ‘too much, too soon’ costs you deals, which two lights need to turn green at the same time—trust and urgency—and how to orchestrate that smartly using the pain curve. Because knowing how ready your customer is to reach for their wallet determines your approach from start to finish. Don’t expect dusty theory, but concrete hooks and examples of how companies build their funnel step by step. The goal: not to push harder, but to time things better.

I am allowed to say this, because I am one myself: many B2B salespeople want too much, too soon. You do not pull a ring out of your pocket on a first date. Sending prospects you have never met an email full of features, dropping your calendar link and asking to ‘get acquainted’ in the very first paragraph is just as pushy.

What is the point, anyway, of pushing, pulling and dragging dead weight? You have zero chance of success. Why? You are too early. Your prospect has no context, no connection with you, no reason to trust you. And so: goodbye atmosphere, goodbye conversation.

In sales, two lights need to turn green at the same time before anything moves:

- **Trust:** 'Are you allowed in here?'
- **Pain/urgency:** 'Is this important enough to do something about it now?'

Without trust, you do not get access. No real conversation. But without pain, nothing moves either. If the thing you are bringing to the table is not a priority, you cannot expect your prospect to take action. The two elements reinforce each other. The greater the pain, the more quickly someone is willing to accept help. And the more trust you build, the easier it becomes to make that pain discussable or visible.

So we start with pain. What exactly is that pain, how does it grow and when does everything tip from 'annoying' to 'we really cannot go on like this'? Enter the pain curve. Let me talk you through it.

