



Sales Coach Series

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Targeting accounts by culture compatibility

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We're familiar with 'targeting' accounts but how do we target them? Turnover, market, IT spend and geography are all widely used indicators and therein lies an issue.

Adopting new criteria for defining key accounts enables us to maximise our chances of winning.

Over the next two months we will consider a few alternatives.

Compatibility of values and culture - A slick salesman from dynamic young Bodge IT is assigned to Traditional Manufacturing Ltd. He walks and talks faster than his contacts and is frustrated by the importance they place on risk analysis. His Sales Manager can't understand why they never take advantage of end of quarter discounts.

Sometimes compatibility is an inter-personal issue, but often an inter-company one. When company cultures are dissimilar the supplier often relies on superficial factors, such as product features and price, to win business rather than developing a business partnership.

Understanding the account's culture and attitude towards their clients - are they service oriented or price driven for instance - will highlight similarities with your company.

Consider also how they treat their employees, their position in their market and their strategic direction. The more synergy you can develop, the greater your chances of building a long term relationship.