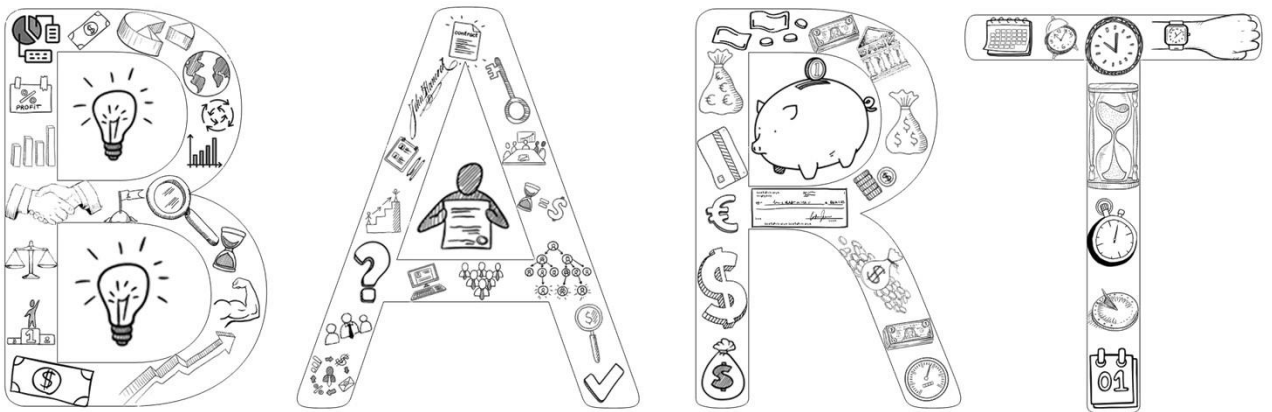


Phoenix Training Innovations Introduces:



The simplest way to qualify prospects!

Prospects must be properly qualified if you are going to sell them anything. But what is the simplest way to qualify prospect and ensure that they have the want, need and capacity to buy from you? Let me introduce you to BART. Using BART, you can simply and quickly get the information you need to determine how qualified your prospect is.

B.A.R.T. Stands for
Buying Criteria | Authority | Resources | Timeline



Let's start with the **B** for buying criteria. This simply means why a prospect would choose a product and what criteria have they used in the past to evaluate and make decisions on similar products. Each step of BART is important, but the reason this step is so important is because without getting this information, you will be left guessing at what they most want out of a product or service, and ultimately won't know why they will choose one over another.

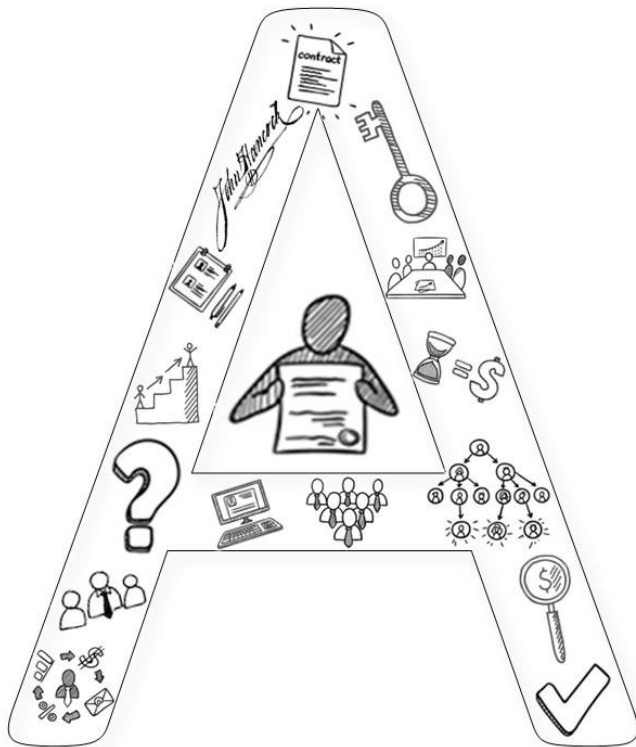
In sales, you must know what the buying criteria is and why, and in what priority order so you can build your presentation accordingly. We can learn a lot about this by asking about why the current system was chosen. But, in some cases, there is nothing currently in place and you will have to ask a different set of questions.

Either way, you should be asking the client about what their ideal or preferred outcomes should look and feel like. You also can't assume that because something is important to the prospect that it is a buying-criteria. For instance, a prospect may tell you that safety is important when selecting a particular line of car, but when asked more specifically about why they will select a particular car; they will tell you things like fuel economy or legroom. That is because they feel as if safety is *standard* in that entire line of vehicles.

To get more information about the buying criteria, you can ask questions like:

- What is the ideal outcome you are looking for and what will this outcome do for your business?
- Why was the current system chosen and has anything changed since these things were most important?
- What criteria will you use to evaluate the company that will provide the solution to you?
- What will you use to evaluate the ideal company representative you will choose to represent this solution?

The biggest priority for you that you must have in a solution is what? Now, get the prospect to rank these in *priority* order so you can get a better understanding of importance of each of these.



But who is really making decisions? Let's ask about the **A**, for authority. Most salespeople's attempts to identify the prospect's decision-making process fail miserably because they tend to overthink the hell out of it and ask questions like: "Who besides yourself makes important decisions here regarding (whatever they sell)?"

The problem with this question is that it paints the prospect into a corner, and ego will usually speak up on behalf of the prospect and the answer is usually a resounding, "ME! I make all important decisions about, well, everything around here!"

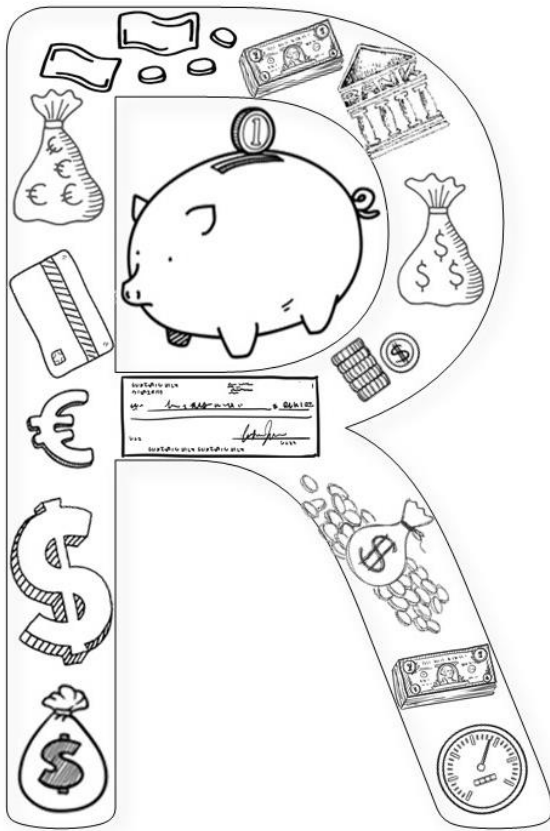
This will become an issue later in your buying cycle when the deal stalls and you are trying to get answers from this prospect because you think he or she is stalling on the decision, that in reality, someone else altogether is making. So, how do you get the prospect to put their guard down and answer you with the truth, but keep their dignity intact?

Let's test your ability to think through this without overthinking: **What is the best question you could possibly ask to determine the prospect's decision-making process?**

If you said; "Can you please tell me about your decision-making process?"

You passed, as that is the best question you can ask to determine the process! This allows the prospect to tell you all about the process and perhaps what role they play, etc. In some cases, you can turn the written agenda over and have the prospect sketch out the process right there, so you also get a visual of the process. You can then ask if it is appropriate to invite some of the people they mention in the process to attend some of the later meetings you will schedule, so they can hear directly from you, are able to ask you questions directly, etc.

Make sure you ask follow up questions about what is important to the other people that will be involved in that process. You don't want to assume that just because a CFO is involved, they only care about cost. Ask the follow up questions to be sure.



But can they afford what you have? The **R** is for resources!

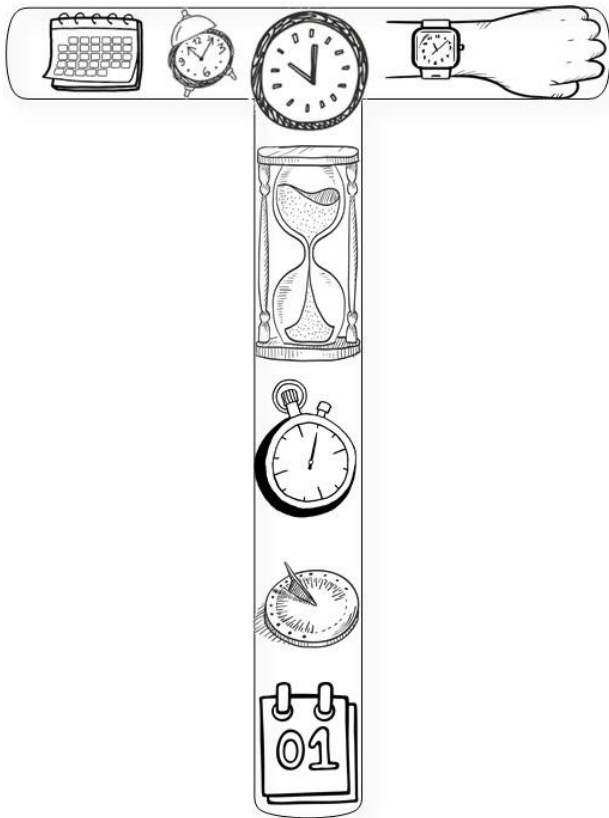
Establishing if the prospect has the appropriate resources is so important because without all of the right resources, the deal could stall or fall out altogether. Keeping in mind that finances can be a delicate subject, when is the right time to discuss money, credit or other resources the prospect may need to make a purchase?

It is better to learn early, even if it is not the answer you want and move on to another prospect that does have the appropriate resources than to mess around with ones that don't. I was told years ago that in sales, you want to close fast or lose fast! It made more sense the more years I spent in sales, as so many salespeople stay hung up on what could be if things were just different. If things aren't right, move on a follow up and maybe the prospect's circumstances will change, and at that point, you can re-engage. Until then, find prospects that have the right resources.

A good way to determine resources is to ask question like:

- What can you tell me about the budget that has been allocated for this project?
- Just so I better understand all elements of how you typically do business; how do you typically pay for these types of services with other partners? Is it with a purchase order, check, corporate credit card or other form of payment?
- *For newer or smaller businesses*, I'll ask: How long have you been in business and are you able to produce bank documents if requested for business credit purposes?

These questions are normal in business and shouldn't be offensive to a prospect. It's not personal, it's business, and businesspeople understand that many of their purchases will require certain documentation or credentials to make certain types of purchases.

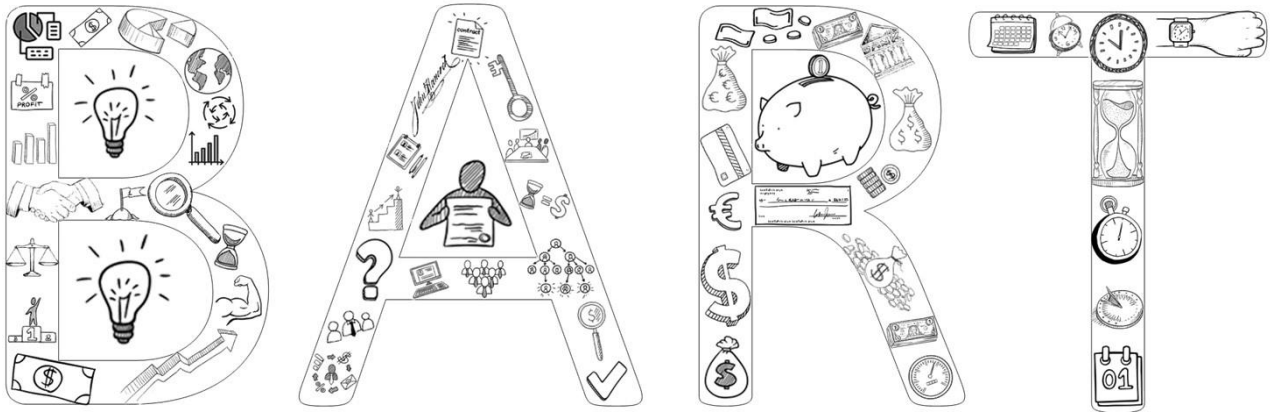


Now, when will all of this take place? The T for timeline will tell us! Timeline questions aren't difficult to ask however determining the prospect's timeline can still be tricky. Some deals are straightforward in that your product matches the prospect's buying criteria, you are dealing with the person or people that actually make the decision and the prospect also has all of the appreciate resources and they seem like they want to move quickly and then... nothing. Here is the point where salespeople start using a bunch of black-op, military lingo to describe the situation. They will say things like: "I don't know what happened to my deal, they went "radio silent" on me." Or "The guy is "M.I.A.", I can't find him anywhere." One of my favorites is; "My prospect "ghosted" me!"

When we get "ghosted" it is typically because there was a breakdown in one part or another in one part of BART. Something changed in the prospect organization regarding the buying criteria or the need to change became a less urgent matter perhaps because the product that is currently in place began working correctly, became more aggressively priced or the support improved. Hence why the steps in BART should be followed carefully and the questions asked with care.

When it comes to timeline questions, you can begin with some simple, straightforward ones like:

- How soon would you like to begin seeing (whatever benefit your product will provide)?
- When do you plan on implementing a new (whatever product you sell)?
- Complete your timeline questions by asking a follow up question that will allow you to determine what things that could impact the timeline like:
- *Do you anticipate anything that would disrupt the timeline you have given me? Things like mergers, acquisitions, layoffs, changes in company structure, budget constraints, or other things?*



Once you have firm, positive answers to all four parts of BART, congratulations, you now have a qualified prospect. This means that the prospect at least has a need, want or problem and the overall ability to fill that need. You will also know a good timeline so you can move the opportunity to the appropriate stage of the sales funnel. At this point, continue to ask questions to determine what business problems may exist and where you may widen your opportunity with additional solutions.

*Excerpt from Sales Secrets of a Five-Year-Old Book by Mikeal R. Morgan - Published 2020
www.mikealmorgan.com*