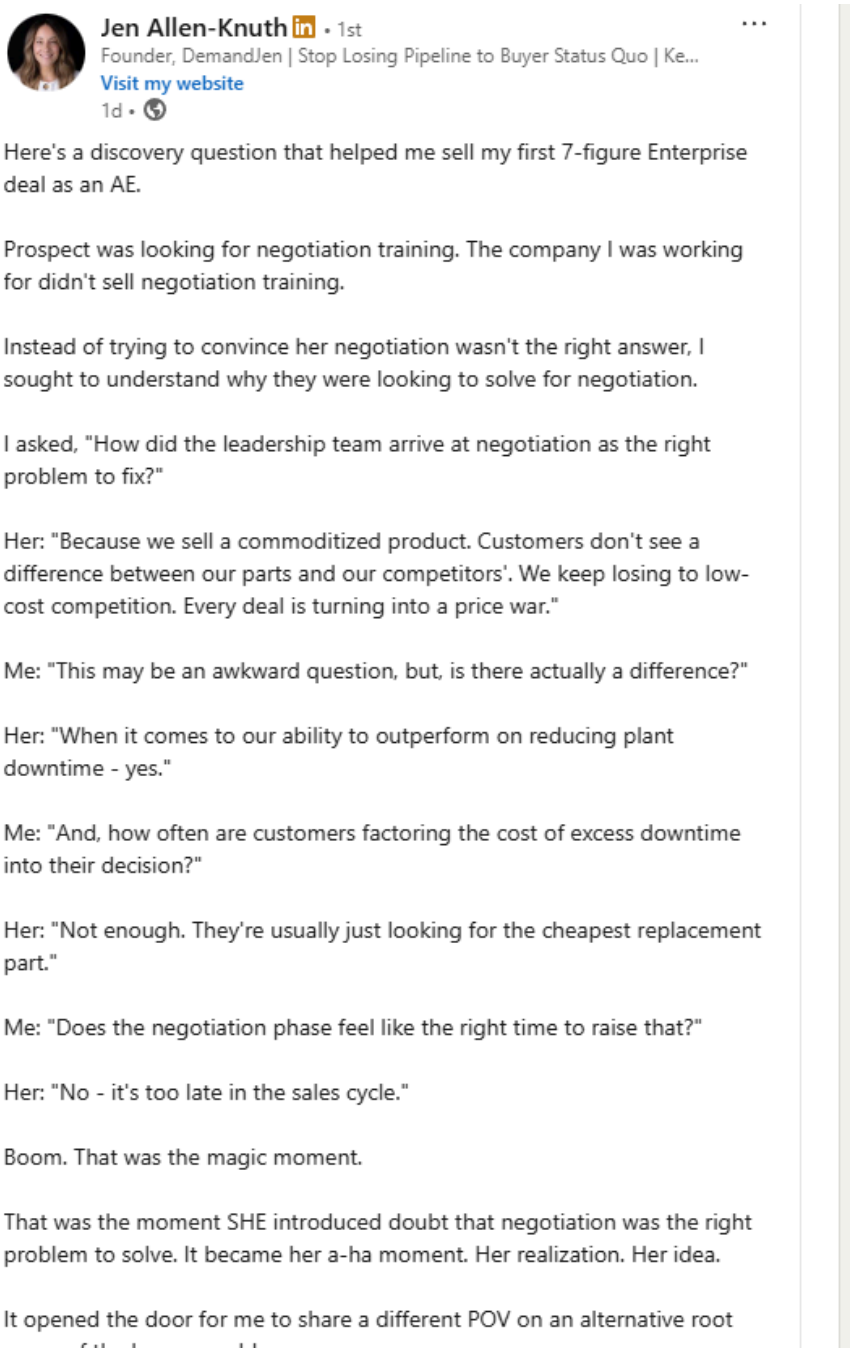
Sales Discovery

- What are generic questions you ask to get a buyer talking?

- What are specific questions you ask to get a buyer talking to refine need, timeline and budget?

You can use these examples as a great way to get interviews or do extra in the middle of the recruiting life cycle to get them to REALLY see your process

> Discovery: Always CLARIFY
>
> - What made you want to take this call?
> - Can you help me understand
> - Can you walk me through?
> - Talk to me about/tell me about
> - Direct questions like "walk me through or tell me about" will get the ball rolling
> - What are your priorities?
> - What is working for you right now?
> - Why does that work?
> - Is this the only way to do x?
> - How did you/they do that?
> - When did you realize it was time to _____?
> - Why is that important?
> - What do you really want?
> - Why do you think that is?
> - How does that make you feel?
> - Sounds like you care about X I'm curious, what impact could you see by Y
>
> Discovery: Problems
>
> - "Many of our clients have told us that are having a big issue with _____I don't suppose that surprises you much..." - Charles Muhbauer
> - This makes discovery more of a conversation and gives them an opportunity to say yes or no.
> - What common problems are you having?
> - When did you realize this was a problem?
> - Tell me more about why this is a problem?
> - What solution are you currently using to do that? What's working?



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Here's a discovery question that helped me sell my first 7-figure Enterprise deal as an AE.

Prospect was looking for negotiation training. The company I was working for didn't sell negotiation training.

Instead of trying to convince her negotiation wasn't the right answer, I sought to understand why they were looking to solve for negotiation.

I asked, "How did the leadership team arrive at negotiation as the right problem to fix?"

Her: "Because we sell a commoditized product. Customers don't see a difference between our parts and our competitors'. We keep losing to low-cost competition. Every deal is turning into a price war."

Me: "This may be an awkward question, but, is there actually a difference?"

Her: "When it comes to our ability to outperform on reducing plant downtime - yes."

Me: "And, how often are customers factoring the cost of excess downtime into their decision?"

Her: "Not enough. They're usually just looking for the cheapest replacement part."

Me: "Does the negotiation phase feel like the right time to raise that?"

Her: "No - it's too late in the sales cycle."

Boom. That was the magic moment.

That was the moment SHE introduced doubt that negotiation was the right problem to solve. It became her a-ha moment. Her realization. Her idea.

It opened the door for me to share a different POV on an alternative root

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/demandjen1_heres-a-discovery-question-that-helped-me-activity-7328061173591916546-NmhQ?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop&rcm=ACoAACecs8kBSkvDmOotxJ1ekz0mWxuP6gWSbo4



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Here's a naughty lil secret about discovery with Enterprise CXOs at accounts we booked via outbound.

Many of us were taught that the purpose of discovery is to understand the customer's needs, so that we can map our solution back to those needs and show how we can help.

Here's the fatal flaw in that theory.

It's outbound. We asked THEM to meet. Most of them haven't decided they have a problem worth solving, and worth solving now. It's why disco convos with outbound opps often feel like pulling teeth.

How could we approach discovery instead?

1 - Build a hypothesis on what business objectives this account is trying to achieve, and seek to understand what you're missing as an outsider.

*Find this in CEO letter to shareholders, interviews with the Founder, CEO guest appearances on podcasts, etc.. Bring it to the call, and frame it as, "This is what I can observe from the outside - what did I miss?."

*I use ChatGPT to answer "Who is the CEO and what are their most recent interviews about the company's growth strategy?".

2 - Be curious about HOW that stakeholder currently believes/assumes they will accomplish that goal, and seek to understand HOW they formed that opinion.

*Example: Company's goal is to 4x subscription revenue by 2025. To do so, CRO believes they must hire more SDRs and raise activity targets. CRO believes these are the right needs, because this approach worked at his/her last 3 companies.

3 - Introduce evidence that contradicts those beliefs/assumptions.

*Our goal isn't to tell them they're wrong. It's to introduce an enemy to that belief/assumption that reveals a crack. Key is to make it so you aren't attacking the person, but rather, exposing them to something environmental that makes 1+1 = 3, not 2. You're looking at the "enemy" together.

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/demandjen1_heres-a-naughty-lil-secret-about-discovery-activity-7308856161049489409-MAji?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop&rcm=ACoAACecs8kBSkvDmOotxJ1ekz0mWxuP6gWSbo4



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If you sell into SaaS companies, here's an easy way to do discovery on the account's current state + business objectives before the discovery call. It'll cost you $0.

Step 1: Go to **founderpath.com/resources**

Step 2: You'll see 29 pages of interviews with SaaS founders & CEOs. Search your target account's name in the search bar on that page.

Step 3: If they've done an interview with them, you'll be able to access their presentation slides (ungated).

Step 4: Review the slides to learn about the company's growth goals, successes and failures, and business objectives.

I came across this site last week while researching an account on behalf of a seller in one of my discovery workshops at an SKO.

When we show up with this kind of discovery already completed, we differentiate ourselves from the sellers who use the discovery call to learn about things we can find on the internet.

This insight allows us to bring a specific POV, loosely held, on how the problem we solve MIGHT be playing out in their business. We seek to be corrected. A correction = discovery.

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Here are two ChatGPT prompts I use to do "discovery before discovery" before every Sales call:

1 - "Explain the problem ACME solves like I'm 10".

2 - "Who is ACME's CEO? What are their most recent interviews about the company's growth strategy?"

Question #1 gives me context. Context helps me frame how the problem my solution solves might be playing out in their business, specifically. This shapes my problem POV (so it doesn't sound generic). And, it saves me time trying to decipher buzzspeak on a company's website.

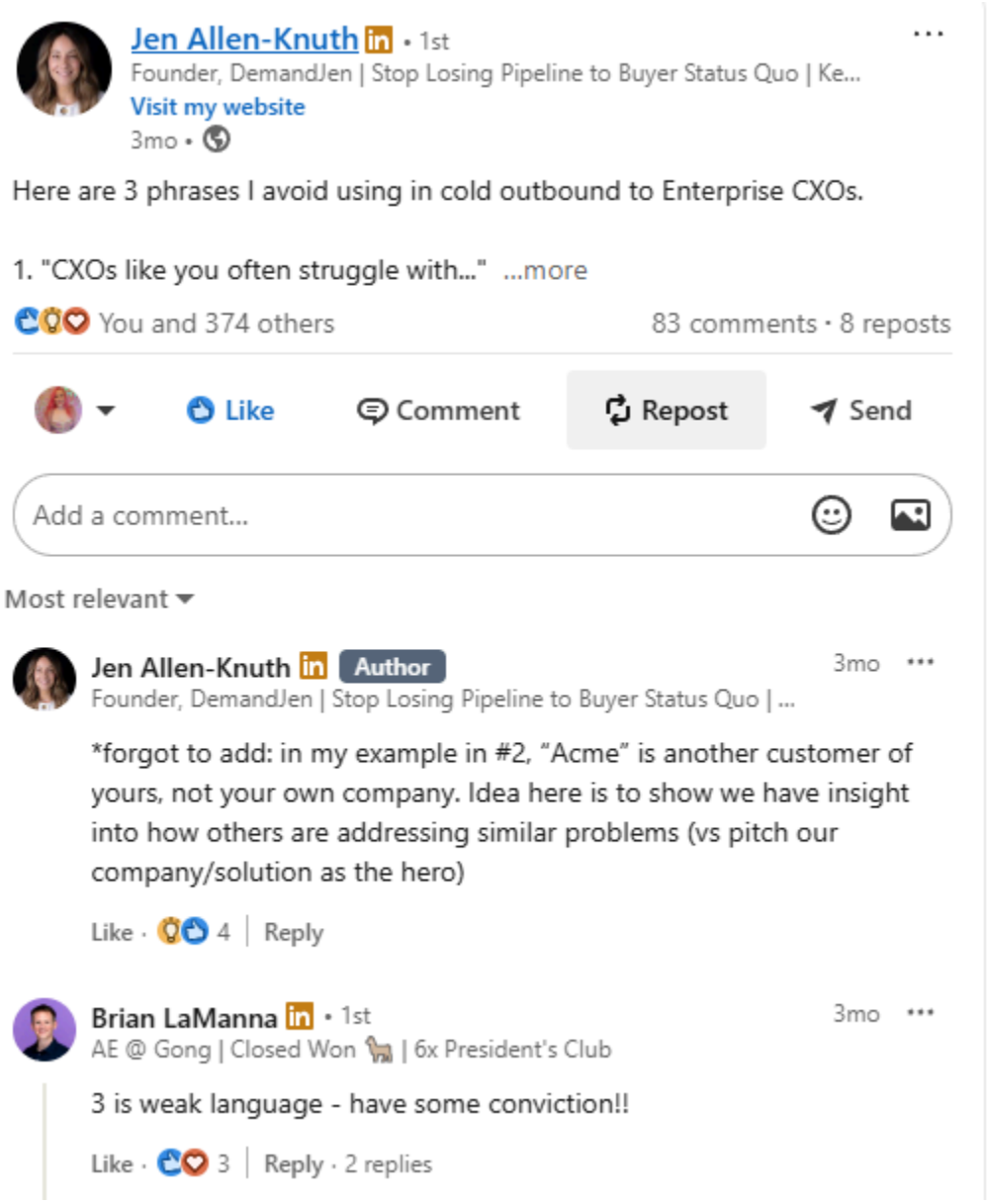
Question #2 gives me insight. Insight helps me understand how this company, specifically, is placing their growth bets. $$ follows CEO growth objectives. I bring this to the call, loosely held, and seek to be corrected. I hypothesize how the problem my solution solves might interfere with one of those growth objectives.

My goal in discovery is to share insight that helps them reconsider an under-appreciated root cause to a known problem (I learned this from my years at Challenger).

Doesn't matter if it's inbound or outbound. Same goal.

If I can flip that switch, that helps me drive a competitive wedge between their status quo (for outbound calls) or other solutions they're considering (for inbound calls).

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/demandjen1_here-are-two-chatgpt-prompts-i-use-to-do-activity-7297266675836407809-f7G3?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop&rcm=ACoAACecs8kBSkvDmOotxJ1ekz0mWxuP6gWSbo4



https://www.linkedin.com/posts/demandjen1_here-are-3-phrases-i-avoid-using-in-cold-activity-7293633431471591424-Z-_d?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop&rcm=ACoAACecs8kBSkvDmOotxJ1ekz0mWxuP6gWSbo4



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One of the biggest culprits for losing winnable deals in Mid-Market and Enterprise is OUR desire to demo our solution early.

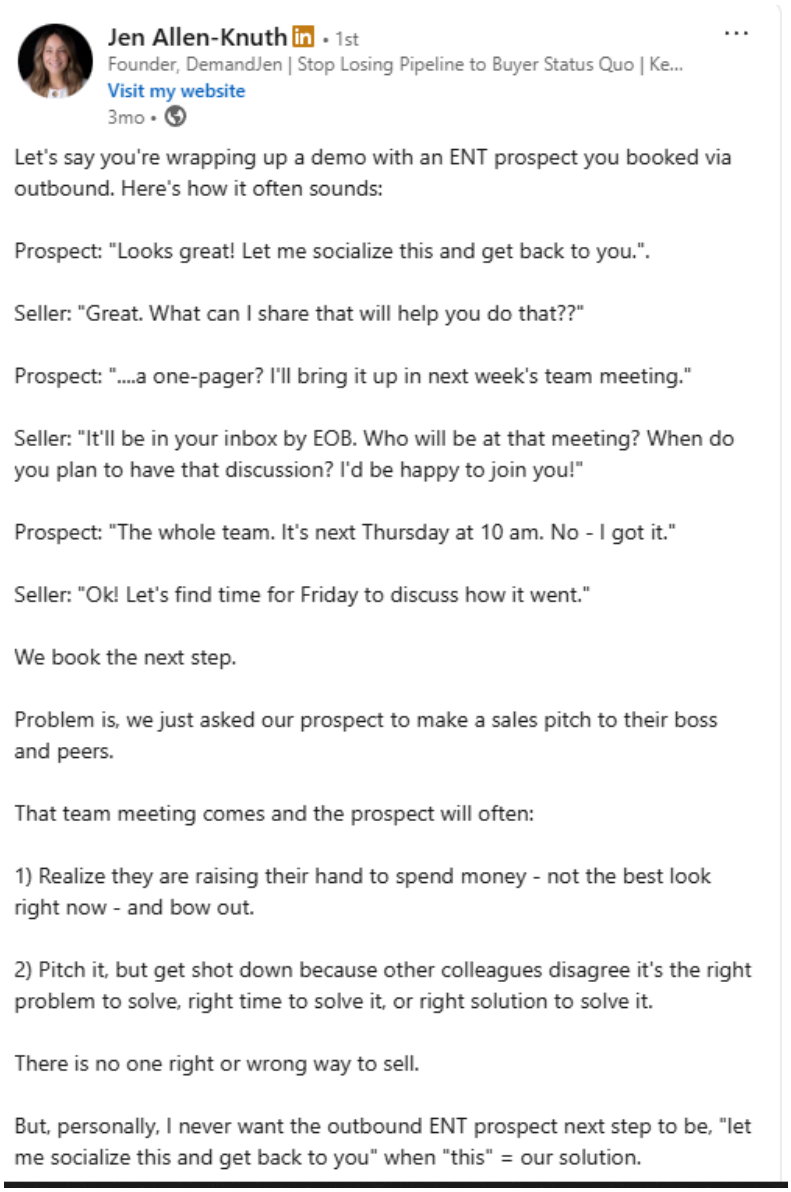
Instead, try slowing down the early convos.

Don't demo a solution until we are on the same page with the customer re: the cost of inaction (COI) of how they're currently solving the problem (status quo).

I lost a lot of winnable deals because I thought the faster I showed them our "better way", the sooner they'd realize they need to act.



https://www.linkedin.com/posts/demandjen1_one-of-the-biggest-culprits-for-losing-winnable-activity-7290019542615965696-tEbt?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop&rcm=ACoAACecs8kBSkvDmOotxJ1ekz0mWxuP6gWSbo4



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Let's say you're wrapping up a demo with an ENT prospect you booked via outbound. Here's how it often sounds:

Prospect: "Looks great! Let me socialize this and get back to you.".

Seller: "Great. What can I share that will help you do that??"

Prospect: "....a one-pager? I'll bring it up in next week's team meeting."

Seller: "It'll be in your inbox by EOB. Who will be at that meeting? When do you plan to have that discussion? I'd be happy to join you!"

Prospect: "The whole team. It's next Thursday at 10 am. No - I got it."

Seller: "Ok! Let's find time for Friday to discuss how it went."

We book the next step.

Problem is, we just asked our prospect to make a sales pitch to their boss and peers.

That team meeting comes and the prospect will often:

1) Realize they are raising their hand to spend money - not the best look right now - and bow out.

2) Pitch it, but get shot down because other colleagues disagree it's the right problem to solve, right time to solve it, or right solution to solve it.

There is no one right or wrong way to sell.

But, personally, I never want the outbound ENT prospect next step to be, "let me socialize this and get back to you" when "this" = our solution.

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Have a contract signature that pushed from Dec -->Jan?

Here are the 2 things I'd do today that don't involve the words, "just checking in!"

1) See where they and their company are HQd.

If they are in an area affected by the LA fires, our signature is not the priority. Full stop.

2 years from now, we'll forget this deal ever existed. It's not worth trading integrity for a commission check.

Instead, see if they've posted about any local organizations/people who need help + donate and/or send them a note of support. NOT because it's some disguised tactic to guilt them into signing a contract (yuck). Rather, because it's the right thing to do. Treat others the way we'd want to be treated.

2) Seek to understand the actual reason for the stall.

Today is Jan 14th, not Jan 3rd. Listen to that gut feeling that's screaming "something is wrong here".

Instead of plowing forward with another "any updates?" email, open the door for them to tell us the truth.

"Did you hit an unexpected roadblock?"

The reason I use this is because it doesn't assign blame to the buyer. It assigns blame to an "unexpected roadblock".

At this point, what I need is the truth about why it's stalling.

If it's bad news, I want to hear it now, not Jan 31st.

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/demandjen1_have-a-contract-signature-that-pushed-from-activity-7284849721179811840-JUyw?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop&rcm=ACoAACecs8kBSkvDmOotxJ1ekz0mWxuP6gWSbo4