

The Friction Finder

Find where your buyers stall, and what to do about it.

How to use this worksheet

Work through it with your last 10 to 12 opportunities in front of you. Plan on 60 to 90 minutes. You can fill it in by hand, or paste your deal notes into Claude and ask it to walk you through each part with you.

The goal is not to fix everything. The goal is to find the ONE spot where buyers stall most often, and go to work there.

Part 1: Your Stalled Deal Audit

List your top 5 deals that have gone quiet for 30 days or more. Fill in what you know, and note what you do not know. The gaps are data.

Deal / Prospect	Stalled since (month)	Interactions so far / last touch date	Who is involved on their side (include end users)	Suspected friction point
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

Priority deal (the one you would most hate to lose): _____

Part 2: The Touch Gap

Most buyers hear from us about three times, if they are lucky. Business typically happens after twelve or more interactions with you. Count what actually happened on each stalled deal.

Deal / Prospect	Total touches	Touches that gave them value	Days since last touch	Touches to reach 12
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

What counts as a touch? Only something the buyer got value from. A message that asks for a decision without giving them anything does not count.

Value touches you can make this week

- A short insight tied to something they told you
- An introduction to someone useful to them (not to you)
- A resource, article, or example from a similar client situation
- An answer to a concern they raised, before they raise it again
- An invitation to an event, roundtable, or conversation tied to their goals
- A quick win: one thing they can do now without hiring you

How many of your stalled deals got fewer than 6 touches? _____

Part 3: Friction Checklist

Check everything that might apply to your stalled deals, then write the deal number(s) beside it. Some items will fit several deals.

Process Issues

- ☐ Next steps were unclear, or we did not agree on one before we hung up
- ☐ Proposal or documentation was confusing
- ☐ Internal approval bottleneck on their side
- ☐ I waited for them instead of leading the process

Decision Committee (new)

- ☐ I only ever met one person
- ☐ The real decision maker was never in a conversation with me
- ☐ An end user or implementer may have raised a concern I never heard
- ☐ Finance, legal, or IT review I did not anticipate

- ☐ Nobody on their side clearly owns the decision
- ☐ Too many decision makers involved

Outcome Vision

- ☐ The buyer can describe the problem but not the result they want
- ☐ They cannot picture how my process gets them there
- ☐ No clear picture of the first 30 or 90 days
- ☐ My proposal focused on my services, not their outcome

Value and Trust Concerns

- ☐ ROI not clearly demonstrated
- ☐ Concerns about implementation complexity
- ☐ Lack of references or proof points
- ☐ Pricing structure confusion

Timing and Urgency

- ☐ No compelling reason to act now
- ☐ Budget cycle misalignment
- ☐ Competing priorities
- ☐ Economic uncertainty paralysis

Buyer Overwhelm and Risk

- ☐ Too many options presented
- ☐ Information overload
- ☐ Fear of making the wrong decision (nobody wants a failure on their watch)
- ☐ Analysis paralysis

Silence and Nurture

- ☐ I stopped contacting them after the proposal
- ☐ They received fewer than 6 touches
- ☐ My last message asked for a decision without giving them anything
- ☐ I have no plan to stay useful to them over the next 90 days

Tally your checks:

Process ____ Committee ____ Outcome ____ Value ____ Timing ____ Overwhelm ____ Silence ____

Your highest count is your likely friction zone. Hold onto it. Part 6 will confirm it.

Part 4: The Committee Map

The CEO used to make the call. Today the decision is often made by a committee, and some of its members may never appear on your calendar. Pick your priority deal and map everyone who could say yes, or quietly say no.

Priority deal: _____

Role	Name (or "unknown")	Have I met them?	Their likely concern	How I will address it
Economic buyer (owns the budget)				
Champion (wants this to happen)				
End user / implementer				
Technical, legal, or risk reviewer				
Finance or procurement				
Someone I do not know about yet				

Questions to answer about this deal

- Who could stop this deal without ever speaking to me?
- Who will live with this day to day, and have they had a voice?
- What would make this look like a failure on someone's watch?
- What implementation objection would an end user raise, and have I answered it in writing?

Notes: _____

Part 5: The Outcome Vision Test

Finding pain is only half the job. The buyer also has to see themselves in your solution, and see how your process moves them to the result they want. Score your priority deal: 0 = no, 1 = partly, 2 = yes.

Can the buyer...	Score (0-2)
1. Describe, in their own words, the result they want?	
2. Describe what is different 90 days after we start?	
3. Explain the steps of my process and their role in each?	
4. Tell you what the first 30 days will look like?	
5. Point to a proposal that opens with their outcome, not my services?	
6. Name someone on their team who has discussed this outcome internally?	

Total score (out of 12): _____

- **0 to 4:** They see your problem-solving, not their future. Rework the conversation before you send anything else.
- **5 to 8:** Partial picture. Find the lowest-scoring questions and close those gaps.
- **9 to 12:** The outcome is clear. Look to the committee or the touch gap for the friction.

Questions that move a buyer toward the outcome

- “When this is working well, what is different for you and your team?”
- “What would you want to be true 90 days from now?”
- “Who else needs to see that outcome for this to feel safe to approve?”

Part 6: Your Stage Stall Map

Now plot where in your sales cycle deals actually stop. Rename the stages to match how you really sell.

Stage in my cycle	Deals stalled here	Typical days in stage	What the buyer needed that they did not get
First conversation			
Discovery / second meeting			
Proposal sent			
Committee or team review			
Decision / negotiation			
Other:			

Where do most of my stalls cluster? (Compare to your Part 3 tally.) _____

This is the spot where you go to work. One spot. Not the whole process.

Part 7: Client Interview Questions

Your best data comes from clients who DID decide to work with you. Book two short conversations and open with:

"I am trying to improve our process. Can you help me understand..."

1. What almost made you walk away during our discussions?

Notes: _____

2. What took the longest in your decision process?

Notes: _____

3. Who else was involved in the decision that I may not have known about?

Notes: _____

4. What information did you need that we did not provide early enough?

Notes: _____

5. What fears or concerns did you have that we did not address?

Notes: _____

6. What did you tell your team to help them feel comfortable moving forward?

Notes: _____

7. When did you first feel confident this would work?

Notes: _____

8. How could we have supported you better during your decision-making process?

Notes: _____

Part 8: Revive Stalled Deals With Value

Silence is not always a no. Buyers who go quiet often return, as long as you stayed useful while they were away. Pick one play for each stalled deal.

Play	What it looks like
The Resource	Send one article, template, or example that matches a concern they raised. No ask attached.
The Introduction	Connect them with someone in your network who can help with a goal of theirs.
The Insight	Share something you noticed in their industry that affects their decision.
The Widen	Offer to walk their team, including the end users, through how implementation would work.
The Story	Share a short story of a client in a similar spot and how the first 30 days went.
The Easy Next Step	Suggest a small, low-risk step, such as a 20-minute working session, in place of asking for a full decision.

Sample opener (edit to fit): *“I came across something that connects to what you said about [their concern], so I wanted to put it in front of you. No reply needed.”*

Your next 4 touches for the priority deal

Date	Play	Message idea

Part 9: Fix One Spot

Do not overhaul everything. Choose one spot, make one adjustment, run it, and look again. Keep adjusting until opportunities are moving.

Your one-spot plan	
The spot where most buyers stall	
What I think is causing it	
The one adjustment I will make	
Start date	
How I will know it is working (what movement looks like)	
Review date (3 to 4 weeks out)	

This week

Interview target 1: _____

Interview target 2: _____

Priority stalled deal to address: _____

One friction point to fix first: _____

Your scorecard

Measure	Today	After 4 weeks
Deals stalled 30+ days		
Average touches per opportunity		
Opportunities with 2 or more contacts on the buyer side		
Opportunities with a next step already on the calendar		

The 4-week cycle: make the adjustment, run it on every new and stalled opportunity, re-run the Stalled Deal Audit, then keep what moves deals and change what does not.

Part 10: Irresistible Offer Ideas

Brainstorm ways to remove friction and risk for your priority stalled deal.

Risk-removers to consider

- A phased start or pilot
- A written first-90-days roadmap
- A reference call with a similar client
- An implementation plan that names who does what
- A defined deliverable at the end of month one
- A working session with their team before they commit

Current sticking point: _____

Option 1: _____

Option 2: _____

Option 3: _____

Which offer would make their decision obvious?

Remember: the goal is not to discount your price. It is to remove their risk and make their decision easier.

Do not just fix stalled deals. Build a pipeline that never runs dry.

Want a second set of eyes on your results? Book a time on my calendar: [\[CALENDAR LINK\]](#)

Get the Referral Playbook: <https://salezworks.com/#resources>

To your influence, Breandan