



Painful B2B Sales Wins

How to Overcome Bad Wins to Improve Relationships and Increase Profits

Is it possible to have a bad win – so painful that you wonder how and why you won (and maybe wish you didn't)? A painful win can create lingering perceptions impacting implementation, account management, relationships, margins, and renewal.

Understanding what happens in these cases can help you avoid this challenging situation. Here's a case study of a major B2B sales rebid win for a large corporation.

The end-user client wanted a partner to help it achieve sustained growth as opposed to quick fixes. The customer also wanted to receive competitive pricing and data driven, knowledge-based support.

Here's what we learned from the client's decision makers about the sales and negotiation process:

1. It took too long to finalize the deal – it spanned many months and was "painful".
2. The seller was perceived as deceptive and not transparent.
3. Repeated contract revisions did not reflect terms previously agreed upon.
4. The selling team attempted to go around the evaluation team to meet with the client's CEO and was rebuffed.

How could this company possibly win? Believe it or not, the other finalist was viewed even more negatively. The competitor's sales team was not truthful, did not incorporate agreed upon price and financial components into the deal, and was "very dishonest". This eroded trust and raised concerns about the working relationship moving forward if this company was selected.

How can you repair the relationship after such a bruising sale? Once you possess an objective understanding of your clients' views (this is essential so you know what to correct), you can implement these actions:

1. Assign an account team that was not involved in the sale.
2. Acknowledge the selling difficulty and assure the relationship will be much different (and better) moving forward.

3. Be transparent, adhere to all terms of the contract, and proactively share and implement ideas to exceed expectations.
4. Make sure your senior team is fully and often engaged with the client's senior team.

While these actions will not immediately repair the relationship, over time positive results will put these negative views in the rear-view mirror.

[Video](#)

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