



## Suspect vs. Prospect: Do You Know the Difference?

### Description

One of the most important keys to being successful in sales is to fill the sales pipeline with qualified prospects on a consistent basis. However, sales professionals often mistake suspects for prospects. By doing so, they get a false sense of the true value of their prospective business and end up ultimately forecasting business that is not yet properly qualified.

So, what is the difference between a suspect and a prospect? To put it simply:

- **A prospect** is a company or individual with a known need for your product or service and who you've already qualified.
- **A suspect** is a company or individual that fits the right client profile but may not:
  - Be actively looking for your product or service
  - Have needs that your product or service can address
  - Be in a position to purchase for one reason or another
  - Have been properly qualified
  - Get you to the right people that can help with decision making or make a decision

Identifying someone as a suspect instead of a prospect does not mean that you shouldn't still go after their business; it's an indicator that there is still more work that needs to be done.

**How does a suspect become a prospect?** A suspect becomes a prospect once they've been properly qualified. A fully qualified opportunity is one in which you have:

- Met or talked with key decision makers, as well as the influencers
- Verified that there is a budget and that it fits with the investment in your product or service
- Determined ways in which you can help them with your product or service
- Gained an understanding of their ROI
- Figured out their process and timeline for making a decision
- Learned about the alternatives that they are considering and the criteria that will be used to make the decision
- Uncovered the risks of the prospect making the wrong decision

Often prospects begin as suspects that we either were introduced to through our networking efforts or secured appointments with through our prospecting efforts. As long as you have a solid, repeatable process to qualify all of your opportunities, your pipeline will be filled with qualified prospects on a consistent basis and you will be amazed at how your forecasting becomes more realistic and accurate.

### **Category**

1. Articles and Blogs
2. resources

### **Date Created**

January 25, 2022

### **Author**

lisa-peskin

*default watermark*