

# Budget Schmudget!

**Jill Konrath**, the author of *Snap Selling*, explains why she avoids consultative selling and asking prospects about their budgets.

**SFXP: We've shared with our readers your feeling that asking a prospect what sort of budget they have can be a deal killer. Can you elaborate?**

Konrath: So many people are told to quickly qualify a prospect and if there is no money, then move on. It's part of their sales DNA. But budgets are always changing these days. If you show prospects the increased productivity and significant savings they can realize by making a change, they'll find money in their budget for that change. Of course, they'll move it from somewhere else.

**SFXP: If you don't ask about budget, then how do you qualify a prospect?**

Konrath: I don't believe in qualifying like most people do. You should be selling the concept. That's the basis on which I've always operated. It's how I've trained people for years. And it works far better than chasing the low-hanging fruit that a gazillion competitors are fighting over.

**SFXP: Don't you state in your latest book that you're also not a fan of consultative selling?**

Konrath: I love being a consultative seller, but a few years ago I discovered that "being consultative" wasn't the best way to start an initial meeting. Today's crazy-busy customers expect you to net it out. You need to make assumptions that your current prospect has similar situations, issues, needs and concerns as similar companies in their industry. You have to prove that you're a viable player before customers open up to you. Demonstrate



your expertise up front. That's how you earn the right to be consultative and have those candid conversations.

**SFXP: What's the key to impressing a prospect during a first meeting?**

Konrath: Let go of the outcome and focus on the possibilities. Rosamund and Benjamin Zander sum up this concept in their book, *The Art of Possibility*: Enrolling is not about forcing, cajoling, tricking, bargaining, pressuring or guilt-tripping someone into doing things your way. Enrollment is the art and practice of generating a spark of possibility for others to share. It's not about your product or service. It's all about the difference it can make for them.

**SFXP: We've talked about some things salespeople would be wise to skip. Are there steps they should be taking that many don't?**

Konrath: Creating a decision map. Walk through the buying decision from their perspective, not yours. Detail every likely step in their journey to closure. Add in time frames. Identify the angst they feel. When you're done, the real work begins. Ask yourself and your colleagues, "How can we make it easier? What can we do to become the differentiator?"

**Jill Konrath is a sales strategist and speaker whose clients include IBM, GE and Hilton. SalesForceXP is having a drawing for 10 free copies of her latest book, *Snap Selling*. Send an e-mail to [Editor@SalesForceXP.com](mailto:Editor@SalesForceXP.com) by April 30 and we'll include your name in the drawing.**

**Read our full Q&A with Jill Konrath online at [SalesForceXP.com/closers](http://SalesForceXP.com/closers).**

