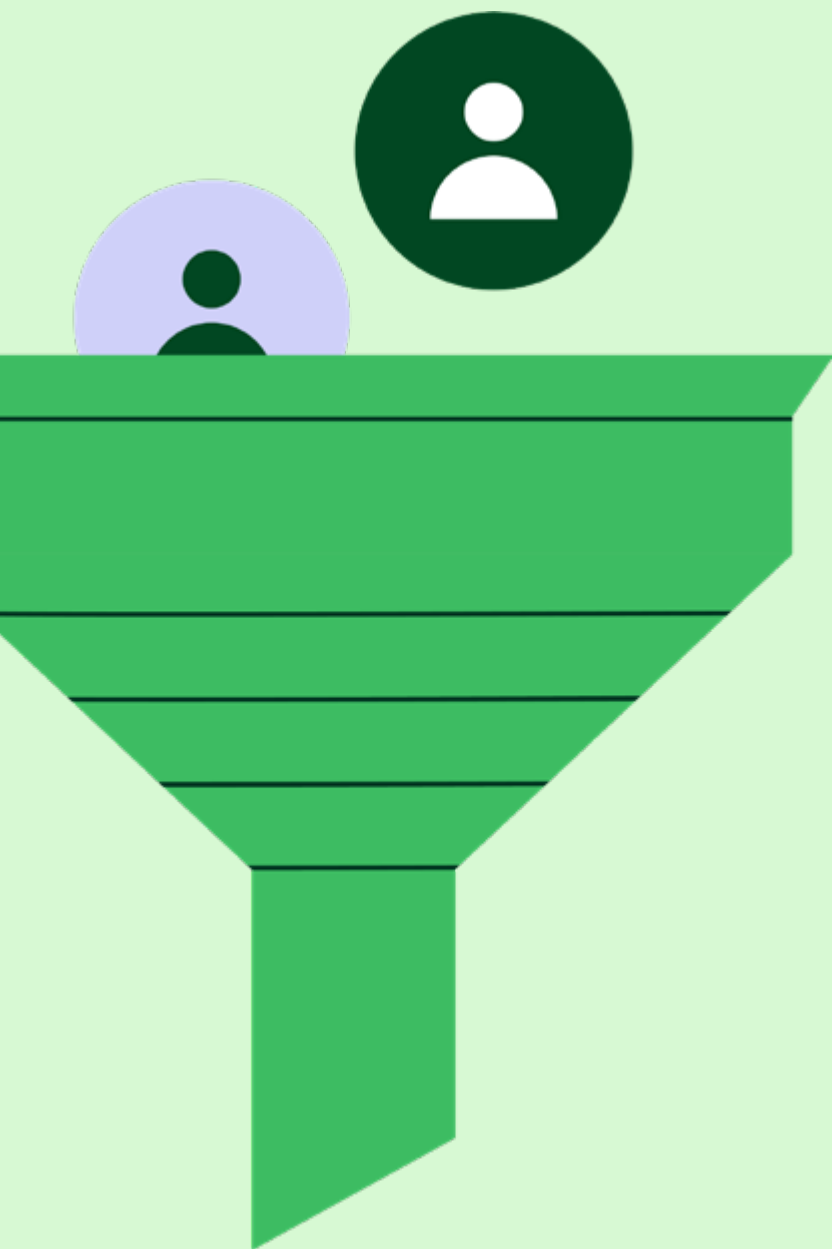4 ways to instantly

Improve your lead qualification machine

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Four simple ways to make sure you're accurately qualifying leads

Lead qualification helps you find the best quality leads, and fast.

But how do you know if you and your team are qualifying leads effectively?

Could your lead qualification process be even better?

Qualifying leads is a tricky business, and your sales team can't afford to waste valuable selling time on cold leads which have almost no chance of converting.

If you've ever been around a marketing and sales team that has complete clarity on how to manage and organize their lead qualification, you know the power an effective sales process can have on your commercial outcomes.

It's a manager's job to take the pressure off their team. Selling is hard. Rejections are a part of life. Failure will happen. The last thing you want to impose on your sales team is a frustrating process.

If you can develop a clean, effective lead qualification process, you'll ease some of your team's anxiety. The best way to improve your team's motivation is to prepare a process that finds an abundance of good quality leads.

This guide explains the four simple steps you can take to make that happen.

Set the right lead definitions and stages

Work together to establish clear criteria on what constitutes a qualified lead for your company.

Marketing and sales should work together to establish clear criteria on what constitutes a qualified lead for your company. Easier said than done, right? ;)

Don't expect to get your process perfect first time. Test quickly and adapt on the fly to squeeze more return out of your lead qualification.

Suppose marketing is part of your lead management process. In that case, you need to know exactly what constitutes a marketing qualified lead (MQL) and exactly when this contact becomes a sales qualified lead (SQL). There should be no confusion about either of these definitions.

The best lead definitions are based on the demographics, activities and behaviors that make a lead a quality prospective customer. **You can compare your best customers and incorporate these insights into your lead definitions to keep improving your lead qualification.**

Your definitions should translate directly into lead qualification questions you ask on lead forms and answer on your lead profiles in your sales CRM. This will make it easy for your team to decide where each lead should be in your sales pipeline and, importantly, where you need to focus your attention.

Incorporate the right questions into your process

Incorporate lead qualification questions into a templated sales process to maintain a consistent approach you can continually optimize.

Pushing leads through sales stages too fast can lose you deals.

Sales teams (and your inbound marketing program) need to consistently uncover the right info to get the right leads to quickly progress to the next stage.

An effective sales process is:

- Clearly defined
- Predictable
- Measurable

Lead scoring should be included in your process at every level to help you improve your sales performance measurement.

Make sure you ask the right lead qualification questions to understand the probability of converting your lead into a customer at any given point in your sales cycle.

Your definitions should translate directly into lead qualification questions you ask on lead forms and answer on your lead profiles in your sales CRM.

This will make it easy for your team to decide where each lead should be in your sales pipeline and, importantly, where you need to focus your attention.

Save time with Automations

Use automation for lead nurturing and simple administrative tasks as much as possible to minimize manual work.

Docurated's inaugural [State of Sales Productivity Report](#) delivered some statistics that should shock you into action:

- Sales reps spend less than one-third (32%) of their time selling and pitching prospects

- Salespeople waste one-fifth (20%) of their working hours managing their CRM, tackling administrative tasks and producing reports

You can't afford to accept these averages.

The best sales process will not add chores to a rep's workload. Instead, your process should save your sales team time.

Some sales CRMs have the functionality to improve your lead profile data by automatically integrating any relevant publicly available info. Pipedrive's [Smart Contact Data feature](#) is a great example, allowing your sales team to save time otherwise spent on lead research.
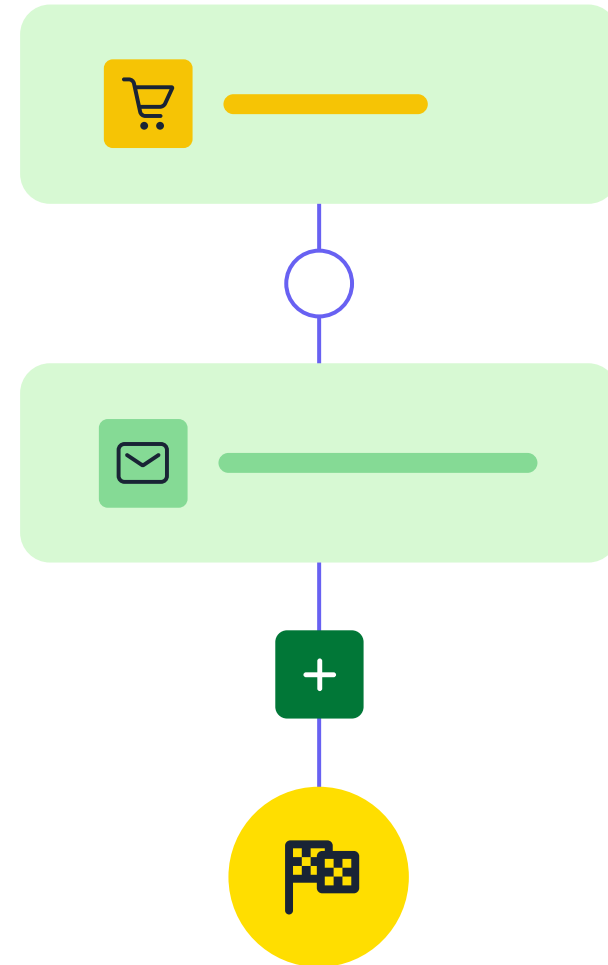
This feature crawls the web for data about your leads from Google, LinkedIn profiles, web listings and other public online sources. It's even better than outsourcing this "data enrichment" process, because the data is immediately available to you and your team.

Data enrichment isn't just useful for qualifying leads; your marketing team can take advantage of this valuable background information to better segment and personalize [customer experiences](#).

However, in the sales stage, the better your preparation, the more control your salesperson has over the direction of any call or outreach. Clear visibility of the lead's personal background, their company's info and a history of all prior communication with your company will make your salesperson's job much easier.

Armed with the right contextual information, your sales team can lead conversations with confidence and optimism – [the most important characteristics for any sales pro](#).

Celebrate, then refine

Remember to celebrate what works, then measure and learn from your results.

Always celebrate your successes! Then turn your attention to using insights from your performance to optimize your lead scoring.

Fine-tuning your process will lead to consistent improvement. Sales feedback is indispensable. Your team can monitor the type of leads that convert, giving qualitative feedback to improve lead definitions, lead scoring criteria and the timing required to receive, nurture and convert the lead.

What you consider an ideal client today might be different tomorrow.

The market moves fast. Customer preferences change, competitors adapt and your offering is also likely to evolve. You need to have the capability to adapt quickly, improve your process fast and incorporate learnings directly from your wins and losses.

Develop a regular monthly meeting to analyze the top ten wins, losses and recycles of your team and see what caused them.

Flag the lost leads that qualified as "hot" and work out what went wrong.

- Were they held up somewhere in the process?

- Was your lead scoring off?

- Did the lead end up in the wrong segment?

Adjust your lead qualification process as factors change (and make sure you're continually monitoring and measuring to generate the data and insights you need to optimize your process).

The four-step process to improve your lead qualification:

1.
Set the right lead definitions and stages

2.
Incorporate lead qualification into a templated sales process

3.
Save time with lead scoring, lead nurturing and simple automation

4.
Celebrate! Remember to celebrate what works, then measure and learn from your results

Great lead qualification starts with proper lead definition and collaboration between marketing and sales.

Incorporate lead scoring into both your marketing and sales processes to optimize lead qualification.

Never stop measuring and monitoring your past performance, or you'll miss a precious opportunity to improve your lead qualification process.

Follow these four simple steps and you can confidently assess the quality of your team's existing process.

And remember, even the perfect lead qualification process won't guarantee you an increase in ROI.

You and your team still have to finish the job and close those leads. But you'll be able to find more of the best leads faster – saving precious time to focus on the things that really matter.

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we can help your business grow