

MANAGER FIELD GUIDE · DEAL IQ · GAME IS SERIOUS

MEDDPICC Under Pressure: A Manager's Practice Guide

Research-first qualification evidence, failure modes, and ICCE coaching for live B2B deals

Frameworks teach recall. Simulation trains the decision that breaks the deal. Deal IQ opens at the Account War Room: intel, TAM, opener, then live turns. This guide is for sales managers, enablement leads, and RevOps owners who inspect pipeline with evidence, not gut feel.

Quick scan

WHO THIS IS FOR

- Sales managers running weekly deal reviews
- Enablement leaders designing MEDDPICC programmes
- RevOps owners who want a shared qualification language

WHAT THIS IS NOT

- Not a MEDDPICC certification programme
- Not a CRM configuration manual
- Not the Deal IQ game rulebook (see link at the end for mechanics)

Research-first before the room

Deal IQ default mode opens at the Account War Room, not the first meeting. Reps read intel documents, cite TAM reasoning, log pain hypotheses, pick a stakeholder, and write an opener before Alex narrates. Managers inspect desk work the same way they inspect live discovery.

1. **Intel:** Open account documents and extract signals. Klara blocks outreach until intel is read.
2. **TAM:** Estimate scope with evidence citations, not a numeric quiz. Intelligence scores reasoning quality.
3. **Hypothesis:** Log what you think hurts and why. Seeds discovery posture for live turns.
4. **Opener:** Pick contact and channel. Write an opener grounded in research. Alex unlocks after gates pass.

Manager tip: In pilot debrief, review desk work before the MEDDPICC board. Weak openers predict weak discovery even when the board looks green later.

Pressure Qualification Loop

1. **Research:** Read intel, cite TAM reasoning, log a pain hypothesis, and write an opener before live outreach.

2. **Frame:** Name the deal hypothesis in one sentence. What must be true for this opportunity to be real this quarter?
3. **Discover:** Gather evidence through customer language. Prefer indirect discovery that keeps the buyer open over checklist interrogation.
4. **Validate:** Confirm each MEDDPICC element with traceable proof: who said it, when, and what would falsify it.
5. **Decide:** Advance, escalate to the Economic Buyer, or fold. Folding early is a qualification outcome, not a failure.

Evidence Ladder (levels 0 to 4)

Level	Label	Evidence signal
0	Unknown	No credible source. Assumption or CRM default.
1	Suspected	Internal guess or single weak hint. Not customer-validated.
2	Indicated	Customer mentioned it, but not quantified or tied to pain.
3	Confirmed	Customer stated it in their words. Linked to business pain or process.
4	Validated	Confirmed with multiple stakeholders or documented in their buying process.

Eight MEDDPICC elements

M Metrics

Quantifiable outcomes the customer cares about: revenue impact, cost, risk, time to value.

Evidence: Customer cites numbers tied to pain, not your ROI slide.

Moves up: Link metrics to validated pain. Ask what happens if they do nothing.

Early mistake: Pitching ROI before pain is confirmed. Metrics without pain feel like marketing.

Manager questions

- Which metric did the customer state in their own words?
- What baseline are they measuring from today?
- Who owns that metric internally?

E Economic Buyer

The person who can approve budget and sign. Often not your daily contact.

Evidence: Named individual, access plan, and criteria they use for spend approval.

Moves up: Map who controls budget. Test access through your champion with a concrete ask.

Early mistake: Treating a friendly contact as the EB because they attend meetings.

Manager questions

- Who can say yes to budget without another approval layer?
- Have we met them or only heard about them?
- What would make them block this deal?

D Decision Criteria

Explicit and implicit rules the customer uses to compare options.

Evidence: Ranked criteria in customer language, including non-product factors.

Moves up: Ask how they compared vendors last time. Listen for unstated risk criteria.

Early mistake: Competitive trash talk before criteria are understood.

Manager questions

- What are the top three criteria, in their order?
- Which criteria favor us vs status quo?
- What proof do they need for each criterion?

D Decision Process

Steps from need recognition to signed contract: who, when, what triggers next.

Evidence: Customer-drawn timeline with names, not your generic sales stages.

Moves up: Walk one recent purchase. Ask what stalled deals last year.

Early mistake: Assuming your CRM stage equals their internal process.

Manager questions

- What happens after this meeting? Who else must weigh in?
- What date is tied to their internal milestone, not our quarter?
- Where do deals like this usually stall?

P Paper Process

Procurement, legal, security, and signature steps after verbal yes.

Evidence: Named owners for legal and security. Rough duration from similar deals.

Moves up: Introduce paper process before late stage. Let champion navigate blockers early.

Early mistake: Opening procurement before decision process is mapped.

Manager questions

- Has legal or security been engaged on scope?
- What is the typical contract cycle for this spend band?
- Who signs and what precedes signature?

I Identify Pain

The business problem and cost of inaction. Strong pain drives budget and urgency.

Evidence: Customer describes consequences of delay in operational terms.

Moves up: Ask about workarounds today. Quantify cost of the workaround.

Early mistake: Solution pitching before pain is owned by the buyer.

Manager questions

- What breaks if they wait another quarter?
- Who feels the pain daily, not only in a steering deck?
- Did they describe pain without us prompting the acronym?

C Champion

Internal advocate with credibility and access to the Economic Buyer.

Evidence: Champion takes risk for you: introduces EB, shares internal docs, coaches you on landmines.

Moves up: Test with a small commitment before a big political ask.

Early mistake: Using champion before trust and influence are tested.

Manager questions

- What have they done that costs them political capital?
- Do they win if we win, in a way they can explain internally?
- When did we last stress-test their access to the EB?

C Competition

Alternatives including status quo, build, and other vendors.

Evidence: Customer names options and how they score them, not only your battlecard.

Moves up: Differentiate on value against their criteria, not feature lists.

Early mistake: Competitive positioning before decision criteria are clear.

Manager questions

- What happens if they choose to do nothing?
- Who else is in the evaluation and why?
- Which alternative are they leaning toward today and why?

Qualify without interrogating

INDIRECT DISCOVERY

Conversation feels mutual. Buyer shares context before you ask for a scorecard field. Rewards richer MEDDPICC advancement in Deal IQ practice.

DIRECT DISCOVERY

Explicit MEDDPICC questions early. Useful when trust is high. Risky when trust is low.

In deal review, ask how the customer experienced the last call. If they felt interviewed, your champion weakens.

ICCE: what to coach when the board looks green

ICCE (Intelligence, Character, Coachability, Experience) scores observable behaviour in Deal IQ. Numbers are deterministic from session evidence. Narrative lines interpret scores; they do not replace them.

INTELLIGENCE

Speed from surface questions to strategic depth.

Coach when: Board is patchy but rep asks sharp second-order questions.

Ask: Which turn changed your understanding of the EB path?

CHARACTER

Integrity, grit, disciplined fold decisions.

Coach when: Rep pushes a dying deal or folds too early from fear.

Ask: What evidence would have justified folding two weeks ago?

COACHABILITY

Adjusts after coaching cues within the same run.

Coach when: Rep repeats the same mistake after Klara flags it.

Ask: What did you do differently on the turn after coaching?

EXPERIENCE

Trajectory across attempts. Weighted lower than the other three.

Coach when: New hire with strong single-run signal but thin history.

Ask: Is this pattern stable across the last three simulations?

Red flags checklist

- Deep MEDDPICC questions while stakeholder trust is still low
- Metrics or ROI before Identify Pain reaches confirmed level
- Paper Process before Decision Process is mapped
- Competition talk before Decision Criteria are understood
- Champion deployed for EB access without a prior commitment test
- Verbal yes with no named owner for legal or security
- CRM stage advanced without new customer evidence
- Single-threaded deal with no plan to multi-thread
- Close date driven by seller quota, not customer milestone
- Green board but no meeting with Economic Buyer in sight
- Rep cannot quote customer words for the top pain
- No documented next step with a named customer action

60-minute pilot agenda

0–5	Frame	Deal archetype, research-first spine, success criteria, MEDDPICC focus element for the session.
5–15	Account Planning	Reps complete intel, TAM, hypothesis, and opener. Manager observes desk work, does not coach mid-step.
15–50	Live simulation	Deal IQ room. Reps play intent-first turns after research gates. Manager observes, does not coach mid-turn.
50–70	Debrief	Research spine replay, then MEDDPICC board. ICCE profile. One failure mode per rep.
70–85	Manager worksheet	Each rep: one keep, one fix, one next deal action.

Debrief worksheet (per rep)

Turn	Rep action (summary)	MEDDPICC target	Trust / access signal	Outcome	Coach note

When to fold

- Pain is weak and no executive sponsor is emerging
- EB is identified but access is blocked with no credible plan
- Decision process timeline exceeds your capacity to invest
- Champion will not take a testable internal action
- Criteria are fixed against you with no path to influence

FAQ

Is this guide a substitute for MEDDPICC training?

No. It is a manager practice layer: how to inspect deals and run simulation-backed coaching. Pair it with your internal playbook and Deal IQ sessions.

How is this different from the Deal IQ rulebook?

The rulebook explains Account War Room mechanics, the three-act journey (war room, live play, debrief), Alex and Klara, and turn structure. This guide explains qualification evidence, deal review, and ICCE coaching in enterprise practice.

Does Deal IQ certify reps on MEDDPICC?

No. Deal IQ is practice infrastructure: live simulation plus behavioural scorecards. Certification vendors teach theory; we train decisions under pressure.

How long is a facilitated pilot?

Typically 60 to 90 minutes per cohort including debrief and export.

Can we customize MEDDPICC elements?

Yes. Client engagements often add dimensions such as Partners or Risk on top of standard MEDDPICC.

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For game mechanics see [deal-iq-rulebook.html](https://gameisserious.com/deal-iq-rulebook.html) · For live pilots: hello@gameisserious.com