

# Selling to Procurement: 7 Mistakes That Are Costing You the Deal

## Deadly Mistake #1: Treating Procurement Like a Roadblock



# Introduction: The Mistakes That Are Killing Your Deals

Let's be blunt.

If you're selling contact center solutions—outsourcing services, workforce tech, customer experience platforms—you're not just selling to operations anymore. You're also selling to Procurement.

And if you don't know how to do that well, you're could be losing deals you should be winning.

This article kicks off a 7-part series: **“Selling to Procurement: The 7 Deadly Mistakes That Sales Makes.”**

These aren't soft missteps or tactical stumbles. These are strategic errors—critical blind spots—that can quietly sabotage your chances even when you've got the best solution on the table.

In each installment, we'll expose one high-stakes mistake, unpack how it plays out in real buying processes, and show you exactly what to do instead.

Because here's the truth:

Procurement isn't the roadblock. It's the gatekeeper.

Understand their world—and you'll win more consistently, more profitably, and with less drama.

## **Mistake #1: Treating Procurement Like a Roadblock**

In my years as a Chief Procurement Officer at Fortune 500-sized organizations, I've probably sat through hundreds of first meetings with sales reps across industries—call center services, technology, consulting, you name it. And here's what I've seen play out again and again:

**Over 90% of reps launch straight into their solution.**

They talk features. They talk benefits. They talk about how their product will make things better for the business stakeholder.

And if we're lucky, they'll throw in a line about "supporting Procurement's process."

But that's not the same as understanding what Procurement is actually solving for.

Here's the deeper truth:

**Less than 10% of salespeople ask what problems Procurement is trying to solve.**

Even fewer try to *anticipate* them.

They assume that the goals of the business stakeholder—like reducing call volume, improving handle time, or boosting NPS—are the same as Procurement's.

They're not.

Procurement focus may include:

- Reducing total cost of ownership
- Mitigating third-party risk
- Ensuring supplier accountability
- Meeting ESG, data security, or labor compliance mandates
- Aligning with broader category strategies or long-term vendor plans

If you don't ask about these, you're missing the opportunity to connect your solution to the part of the buying process that holds real decision-making weight.

And here's the kicker:

**Most of the 90% who don't ask, think they're in the 10% that do.**

This isn't about laziness—it's about a blind spot.

They genuinely believe they're being strategic by talking about outcomes, but they've only tuned into *one half* of the buying conversation.

The other half—Procurement's half—is happening whether they're part of it or not.

## Conclusion: Procurement Isn't Blocking the Deal—You Might Be

Salespeople who treat Procurement like a hoop to jump through—or worse, a hurdle to get past—are missing the bigger picture. Procurement isn't there to delay or disrupt. They're there to deliver value, reduce risk, and protect the business. That includes picking the right suppliers—and avoiding the wrong ones.

When you ignore what matters to Procurement, you sideline yourself from half the decision. And in today's environment, that half can be the difference between winning and losing.

In the next article, we'll expose **Deadly Mistake #2: Making It Hard to Do Business with You**. Because even if your solution is brilliant, Procurement is watching how you operate—and friction might be costing you the deal before the ink even dries.

### Want to take the next step?

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